

ECTOD's

Child-Care Chatter

News and Information for Early Childhood Professionals

We're Wearing a New Look!



Did you ever look in the mirror and say to yourself, "Hmmm, I could use a new look"? Well, that's what we at MB&A Training on Demand did recently. We decided that we could use a new look and, while we were at it, an updated name. So, here we are—Early Childhood Training on Demand

(ECTOD)—with a new image but the same quality courses and service at the same affordable price.

While we were at it, we updated our web page, ECTOD.com, to reflect our new look and to make navigation easier for you. We hope you like the changes!!!

Volume 8, Issue 1

Inside this issue:

Wearing New Look	1
CDA Training?	1
New Courses	1
Mac Update	2
Cartoon Taste Test	2
Carole's Corner	2
Tech Notes	3
Small Business Tips	3
Creativity Crushers	4

Need CDA Training?

We are very excited to announce that we now offer a package of computer-based training that can be used to obtain the CDA credential. ECTOD, in cooperation with Bainbridge College, offers you a wide selection of courses from which you may choose to meet the 120-hour training requirement for the CDA. You will take most of the courses through our familiar CD-based or downloadable courseware. Additional

hours will be accumulated through Bainbridge College courses offered to you online. As always, you will pay as you go when you take our courses—no prepayment or minimum number of courses you have to take. You can also combine our courses with CEU credits you have earned from other sources. No other training organization offers you that convenience!

We are committed to developing and bringing you quality courses in the most convenient format possible. Check the "New Courses" section below to read about our newest courses and plans for the future. You can also visit our website at ECTOD.com for further information about the CDA training.

New Courses

Since the last CD release, we have added six new courses, and others are on the way! All of the new courses are available for immediate download at our website, ECTOD.com and will be included in the upcoming Release 8.0 that will be available this fall. The newly released courses include the following:

- *Bullying I: Bullies, Victims & Bystanders*
- *Bullying II: Prevention and Intervention*
- *Cognitive & Language Development of Preschoolers*
- *Physical & Emotional Development of Preschoolers*
- *Learning Environments for Preschoolers*
- *Itchy, Sneezing, Wheezy: Managing Childhood Allergies*

Additional courses are in various stages of development, so be sure to check ECTOD.com for new releases.

We also appreciate your suggestions for new course topics!

Mac Update

After a few false starts and stumbles, we can now offer you a viable Mac-friendly version of our courseware. You can download any or all of our courses in a compatible format by going to our website.

ECTOD.com, and clicking on the Mac icon.



Security on the Mac does not allow us to use the autorun function we use with the

PC version of our software, but it's easy to download and unzip the courses directly to your computer. Just follow the directions and remember that we are always there to help you if you need us.

The Cartoon Taste Test

If you've ever watched a child in the cereal aisle of a grocery store, you know they head straight for the boxes that have Shrek, Dora the Explorer or some other cartoon character on the box.

Could it be that children think the foods in these boxes taste better? Well, a group of researchers from Yale University's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity decided to put that question to the test.

The results—85% of children said that food in packages decorated with cartoons tasted better than the exact same food in plain, cartoonless packages.

Source: www.npr.org, 6/21/10.

Carole's Corner

There seems to be a lot of interest currently among parents and early childhood professionals regarding Asperger Syndrome. There also seems to be a fair amount of confusion regarding exactly what Asperger's is and is not. It is always good to know the facts regarding the signs and symptoms of any disorder when considering the developmental stages of young children.

Asperger Syndrome (AS) is an autism spectrum disorder, though it is said to be on the "high end" of the spectrum. Children with Asperger's, especially in its milder forms, are often thought just to be strange or odd. They may or may not exhibit all of the symptoms of classic autism.

There are some differences between classic autism and AS. Children with AS are typically very bright. They often, though not always, have very sophisticated language skills and will sometimes sound like "little professors" when they talk. Though there are always exceptions, children with AS tend not to exhibit some of the repeti-

tive, self-stimulating behaviors (rocking, spinning, humming) associated with classic autism. They do, however, share many other traits.

Children with AS almost always show limited interests or have a preoccupation with a particular subject to the exclusion of other activities or interests. They usually engage in repetitive routines, and they have a formal, or monotonous, manner of speech. They exhibit poor social skills, and their emotional behavior is often inappropriate. For instance, instead of walking up to a person and hugging them, they might approach the person in a very formal manner and say, "I believe it is time for you to give me a hug." Their poor social skills and narrow interests are usually the reason for their isolation from others, not the severe withdrawal from the world that is often seen in classic autism.

AS is much more common in boys than in girls. Research indicates that boys are three or four times more likely to have AS than are girls.

The diagnosis of AS is typically a two-stage process.

The first stage is consists of a developmental screening with a pediatrician. The second stage is a comprehensive team evaluation either to rule AS in or out. The team generally includes a psychologist, neurologist, psychiatrist, speech therapist, and other professionals who work with the child and have expertise in diagnosing children with AS.

With appropriate treatment and early interventions, children with AS learn to cope successfully with their disabilities. However, as with classic autism, there is no cure for this disorder. Individuals with AS are likely always to find social situations and personal relationships challenging. Early intervention is one of the most effective tools we have to teach the coping skills these individuals will need if they are to live successful, productive lives.



Tech-Notes

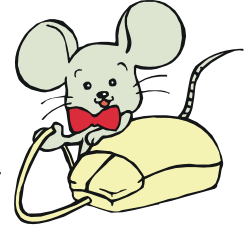
Many of us feel that we are being overloaded with information these days. We eat, sleep, work and play with our cell phones in hand. TV, radio and billboard messages are all around us. To make matters worse, we start each day with a load of e-mail messages, many of which we do not want. One way to reduce this information overload is to get your e-mail under control. Here are some tips that can help you do that.

- **Turn off automatic notification of incoming e-mail.** You don't need to know each and every time a message posts. Then set specific times during

the day to check your mail and take action on messages.

- **Don't sort your messages.** Sorting messages into folders is a waste of time, especially since you can search your inbox if unnecessary.
- **Use acknowledgements when there's no time for a response.** If you can't respond to an e-mail right away, acknowledge receipt and tell the sender when you're likely to get back to them.
- **Get to the point!** Write a clear, meaningful subject line, and keep your mes-

sage brief and to the point. That saves time for you and the receiver.



- **Never respond to spam.** By responding to spam or by unsubscribing, you are confirming that your e-mail address is active. Confirming this will only generate more spam. So, just hit the delete button or use e-mail software to remove spam automatically.

Tips for Small Businesses

In today's market, small business owners can use all the help they can get. Here are some tips you may find useful,

- **Surround yourself with experts.** You may not be able to afford an accountant, marketing expert, or business strategist, but that doesn't mean you can't learn from these experts. If you don't know any personally, ask friends, family members, neighbors, etc. Offer to take your experts to lunch in exchange for a little advice.
- **Don't procrastinate.** When you own a small business, tasks and paperwork can pile up. Avoiding them is like piling up debt. They can overwhelm even the most talented business owner.
- **Never ignore the competition.** Customer loyalty is in

decline. Even your most faithful customer can and will go where they can find the best products and services, even if that means terminating long-term relationships.

- **Never ignore customer needs.** Once you establish a solid customer base, work hard to maintain it.
- **Look for competence.** Hire the best and most skilled workers you can find. Happy employees are good, productive workers.
- **Watch your cash flow.** Carefully track the money coming into and out of your business. Monitor your spending and learn how to create cash flow.

Source: Raphael Garcia, "Tips for Small Business Success," Black Enterprise, 2002.

**NEED MORE FREE CDs?
JUST LET US KNOW.**

NAME: _____

SCHOOL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

E-MAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

COPIES NEEDED: _____

MB&A Training
125 Stepping Stone Ln
Alpharetta GA 30004-4009
1-877-655-7139
FAX: 770-667-9906

Creativity Crushers

Adults seem to find ways to crush creativity in children, no matter how hard they try to avoid doing so. We don't do it on purpose. It's just second nature for us to do some of the things we do. For example...

Surveillance: We hover over kids, making them feel that they're constantly being watched while they are working. Their risk-taking, creative urge disappears under constant observation.

Evaluation: We constantly make kids worry about how they are doing, which takes away the satisfaction they should be getting from their accomplishments.

Rewards: Believe it or not, excessive use of prizes can deprive a child of the intrinsic pleasure of creative activity. We are so eager to praise, praise and over-praise.

Competition: Young children actually prefer cooperation to competition. By putting kids in a win-lose situation, where only one person can come out on top, we take away their willingness to explore and try new things.

Over-control: Constantly telling children how to do things leaves them feeling like their originality is a mistake and any exploration a waste of time.

Restricting choice: When we tell children which activities they should engage in, instead of letting them follow their curiosity and interests, we restrict active exploration and experimentation that might lead to creative discovery and production.

Pressure: By setting grandiose expectations for a child's performance, we often end up making them

reject a subject or activity. Unreasonably high expectations can pressure a child to perform within artificial boundaries. As a result we discourage experimentation, exploration, and innovation. Our grandiose expectations are often well beyond children's developmental capabilities.

So, next time you find yourself hovering over a preschooler as she paints a picture or you realize that you are telling a child that he would have more fun playing with blocks than the sand tray, stop and think, "Am I crushing creativity in these children?" If your answer is "yes," then back off and let them explore and create.

Source: Goleman, Daniel, Paul Kaufman, and Michael Ray, *The Creative Spirit*, Plume, 1993.
